The TEXTILE MAGAZINE

Italian Technology charts the course for revival

"FOCUS ON INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY TO WIN GLOBAL CHALLENGES"

Operating in a scenario characterized by geopolitical instability, slowing industrial investments, and new protectionist pressures. This is the main challenge for the Italian textile machinery industry that emerged during the General Assembly of ACIMIT (Association of Italian Textile Machinery Manufacturers), held today in Milan at the Shareholders' Hall of Palazzo Edison.

The president, Marco Salvadè, presenting the sector's final figures for 2025 based on ISTAT data, highlighted how the weakness of the European and global manufacturing framework conditioned the sector's results. However, despite widespread instability and contraction in traditional markets, Italian technology confirms its position as a world leader.

The President: "The path to revival goes through innovation, sustainable transition, and preparation for the great milestone of ITMA 2027."

In 2025, domestic production in the textile machinery sector stood at approximately €1.94 billion, recording a 9% decrease compared to the previous year. Exports also suffered a contraction, falling by 8% to a total value of €1.675 billion. On the domestic front, home sales amounted to €266 million (-14%), highlighting a demand that, although showing moderate growth in overall domestic consumption thanks to rising imports (+14%), remains insufficient to trigger a genuine acceleration in national investments.

The decline in Italian exports affected numerous traditional target markets, including North America and Turkey, the latter experiencing a particularly difficult trend. However, Asia confirms its position as the primary destination, absorbing 40% of total exports (€667 million), followed by the European Union (24%) and non-EU Europe (11%). In terms of product categories, finishing and dyeing machinery led overseas sales (33% of the total), followed by accessories (20%) and spinning machinery (15%).

Amid this complex scenario, India's outstanding performance stands out. In 2025, it became the leading market overall for Italian textile machinery exports, with sales leaping to €176 million (+28% compared to 2024). This signal rewards the dynamism of the local supply chain and the recognized value of Italian technological quality.

The President: "The 2025 data require attention but must be read within an unprecedented and fragmented global economic situation. Our sector competes globally through technological quality and customized, high-value-added solutions. To support this drive, we reiterate to the institutions the need for coherent industrial policies, with incentive tools for innovation and digitalization that are stable over time and easily accessible."

Sustainability is confirmed as the true competitive pillar of Italian technology. ACIMIT manufacturers continue to invest heavily in R&D to develop highly energy-efficient machinery and advanced automation, while also focusing on solutions capable of drastically cutting the consumption of customer textile companies, simultaneously contributing to a reduction in production costs.

The President: "Today, the ecological transition is no longer an optional accessory, but our main distinguishing feature on international markets. The priority is to strengthen the dialogue with the school and research systems to attract young talent, because without skills there is no innovation."

If 2025 was a year of transition and resilience, the 2026-2027 biennium will be entirely focused on preparation and global relaunch, with all eyes set on ITMA 2027—the world's premier showcase for the sector, taking place from September 16 to 22, 2027, in Hanover, Germany. ACIMIT has already launched intensive internationalization programs, translating into numerous dedicated promotional activities carried out in synergy with the Italian Trade Agency (ICE) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The major ongoing changes were at the heart of the subsequent Public Assembly, titled "Competing in a Changing World." The debate, moderated by Luca Orlando, journalist and correspondent for Il Sole 24 Ore, brought together institutions and influential figures from the economic and manufacturing spheres.

In addition to Marco Salvadè's report, the event featured valuable macroeconomic and geopolitical insights from Marco Fortis (Vice President of the Edison Foundation) and Paolo Magri (Chairman of the ISPI Scientific Committee). The perspective was then broadened to encompass the challenges of the supply chain and the European market through contributions from Luca Sburlati (President of Confindustria Moda) and Dirk Vantyghem (Director General of Euratex).

The speakers' presentations clearly highlighted how the ability to act as a cohesive system, combined with a steadfast commitment to the core pillars of Italian industrial identity—flexibility, innovation, and quality—are decisive factors in cementing the global leadership of Made in Italy.